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AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE

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(30) Priority: 19.04.1999 US 293910

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Baaderstrasse 3

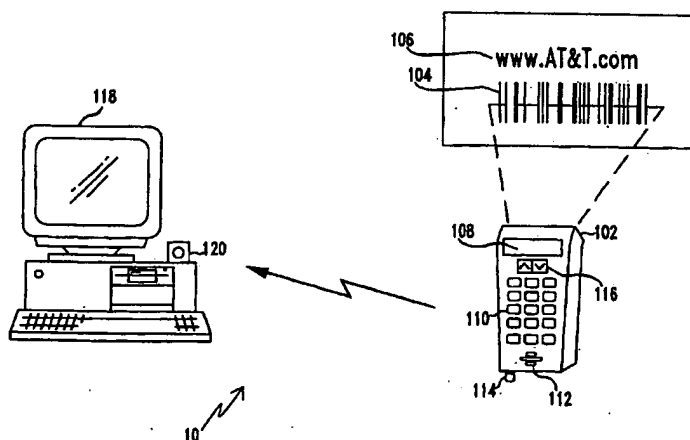
80469 München (DE)

(54) System and method for scanning & storing universal resource locator codes

(57) A universal resource locator (URL) code scanning and storing device and method for scanning a code to generate a URL, storing the URL, and later uploading URLs from a list of selected previously stored URLs to an Internet access device. The URL scanning and storing device may also store additional textual and audio

comments corresponding to stored URLs. Once the URL is uploaded to the Internet access device, the Internet access device may then use the URL to access information, such as a web-site relating to the URL, via the Internet.

FIG. 1



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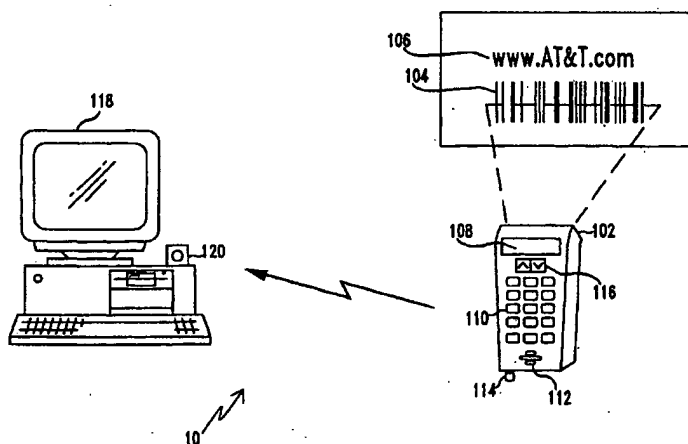
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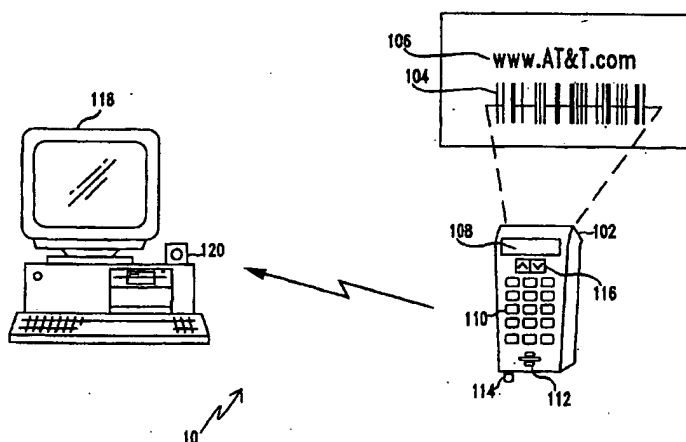
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FIG. 1



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Description

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to a method and system for acquiring and storing Internet uniform resource locator (URL) codes and subsequently uploading the URL codes to an Internet access device terminal.

2. Description of Related Art

[0002] With the rapid expansion of Internet capabilities and Internet users, the number of new web-sites is rapidly expanding. Each web-site has its own unique Uniform Resource Locator (URL) code. URLs are increasingly being used in advertising in newspapers, magazines, on cereal boxes, on the backs of trucks, and the like. People viewing these URLs may want to visit the advertised web-sites; however, they may not be able to write down or remember the URLs long enough to enter them into an Internet access device. Therefore, there is a need for new technology to allow users to recall URLs for use in accessing web-sites.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention provides a URL storage device. The URL storage device includes a scanner for scanning a code to generate a URL, a memory for storing a plurality of URLs, and a transmitter for uploading selected URLs to an Internet access device, whereupon the Internet access device uses the URL to retrieve information. The URLs may be selected from a list of previously stored URLs from a memory by a user.

[0004] Additionally, the URLs may be stored with additional information to later aid in identifying and retrieving a particular URL. The additional information may be in either a textual or audio format and may be inputted by a user through an alpha-numeric keypad or microphone, respectfully.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0005] The invention will be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which like elements are referred to with like numbers, and in which:

Fig. 1 shows an exemplary embodiment of a system according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 shows an exemplary block diagram of a URL storage device;

Fig. 3 is an exemplary data structure for storing URLs and related information;

Fig. 4 is an exemplary flowchart outlining one method for scanning and storing URLs according to

the present invention; and

Fig. 5 is an exemplary flowchart outlining one method for uploading URLs according to the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0006] Fig. 1 shows an exemplary embodiment of a system 10 according to the present invention. The system 10 includes a URL storage device 100 having a scanning element 102 for scanning a code 104 which represents a URL 106, for example, "www.AT&T.com." The scanned code 104 is used to generate an electronic version of the URL which is stored within the URL storage device 100. The stored URLs may be uploaded to the Internet access device 118 for use in accessing web-sites associated with the stored URLs.

[0007] The URL storage device 100 further may include a display 108, a keypad 110, scroll keys 116, an audio input/output device 112, and a transmitter 114. The display 108 can be used to display URLs 104 to a user of the storage device 100. Additionally, the display 108 can be used in conjunction with keypad 110 and scroll keys 116 to display and scroll through previously stored URLs, enter textual messages corresponding to the URLs, and the like. The display may be a liquid crystal display (LCD), light emitting diode (LED) display, or the like. In addition, the keypad 110 and the display 108 can be combined into a touch sensitive display or the like.

[0008] The keypad 110 can be an alpha-numeric keypad, or the like. The storage device 100 may also include scroll keys 116 to perform scrolling functions on the stored URLs displayed on display 108. Additionally, as described in greater detail below, the keypad 110 can be used to enter and store textual comments corresponding to each URL.

[0009] The audio input/output device 112 can include a speaker/microphone for playing and recording audio messages to and from the user. As described in greater detail below, the URL storage device 100 can store audio messages corresponding to the stored URLs. The audio messages can later be played back through the audio input/output device 112 if the user chooses to listen to additional information about a stored URL.

[0010] The URL storage device 100 uses the transmitter 114 to upload stored URLs to the Internet access device 118 through a corresponding receiver 120. The transmission can occur in a variety of ways, such as via a cable, infrared (IR) signal, radio frequency (RF) signal, or the like. Once the uploaded URLs are received by the Internet access device 118 via the receiver 120, they may be stored by a software application running on the Internet access device 118. The URL may then be used to retrieve information from web-sites corresponding to the uploaded and stored URLs.